

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

DECEMBER 9, 2003

As of January 1, 2004, all hospitals, including those operated by the County, will have to meet new State-mandated inpatient nurse-to-patient ratios. These standards are being put into place at a time in which there is a severe shortage of licensed nurses, not only in California, but also across the nation. Given this, the competition for new nursing staff is great.

Over the past several years, the Department of Health Services (DHS) has been working to improve its recruitment and retention of nursing professionals. These activities have included the Registered Nurse Service-Scholarship Grant Program, the establishment of a nurse tutoring and mentoring program, Registered Nurse and Licensed Vocational Nurse education for existing DHS employees through the Workforce Development Program, and outreach and recruitment targeted to graduating nurses. Two initiatives that were employed in the past to enhance recruitment efforts were the creation of a Registered Nurse Service-Scholarship Grant Program and an Employee Referral Award Program for hard-to-fill licensed nursing positions.

- MORE -

MOTION

MOLINA	_____
BURKE	_____
YAROSLAVSKY	_____
ANTONOVICH	_____
KNABE	_____

In 1994, the Registered Nurse Service-Scholarship Grant Program was initiated by this Board and was modeled after the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) recruitment. Under this program, scholarships are awarded to students enrolled full-time in training programs. Recipients must sign agreements to work full-time as a Registered Nurse (RN) in a County hospital or program for a minimum of one year after completion of training and licensure as a RN.

DHS had an Employee Referral Award Program in place in the early 1990's, which resulted in increased referrals of nurses to DHS facilities. The re-establishment of this program would provide an incentive to DHS employees to participate in the recruitment process.

Word of mouth among professional peers plays a key role in recruitment activities and Employee Referral Award Programs provide an incentive to employees to act as recruiters among their colleagues and friends. Such a referral program also serves to recognize the efforts of workers in bringing in new employees to the work force.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Director of Health Services to include in its December 15 report on nurse recruitment activities the proposed scope and steps necessary to expand the Registered Nurse Service-Scholarship Grant Program and re-establish the Employee Referral Award Program to assist in the effort to recruit licensed nursing personnel to DHS facilities.

#

MDA:kblc